JOSEPHINE BUTLER

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Josephine E. Butler An Autobiographical Memoir:

Содержание

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PREFACE

It is very difficult worthily to record the history of one of the noblest women who ever lived, but, having been asked by the Ladies' National Association for the Abolition of Government Regulation of Vice to prepare a Memoir of Mrs. Josephine Butler, we have tried to tell her life story as far as possible in her own words, by means of extracts from her writings, with just sufficient thread of explanation to hold them together. The present volume is therefore to a large extent an autobiography, taken chiefly from her *Recollections of George Butler*, and from *Personal Reminiscences of a Great Crusade*; but selections have also been given from most of her principal publications, so as to give some idea of her extensive literary work. We have not included any *private* letters, as it was her strongly expressed wish that these should not be published.

Many of the quotations have been abridged, but they have not otherwise been altered, except in a few cases where dates, etc., have been corrected. We have however ventured, for the

sake of securing a continuous narrative, occasionally to combine passages taken from different sources.

As this volume is intended to give an account of Mrs. Butler's own life and work, it has not been possible fully to sketch the history of the movement, with which her name was specially identified, or to allude to many of those associated with her in that movement, whose labours she so heartily appreciated, and whose friendship she so greatly valued.

We are much indebted to the editors of *Joséphine E. Butler: Souvenirs et Pensées* (Saint-Blaise, Foyer Solidariste, 1908), having in many cases used the same extracts as are given in that volume. We have also to thank Mrs. Butler's representatives and various publishers (Horace Marshall & Son, Macmillan & Co., and others) for permission to quote from copyright works.

G. W. J.
L. A. J.

May 1st, 1909.

INTRODUCTION

Josephine Butler was one of the great people of the world. In character, in work done, in influence on others, she was among that few great people who have moulded the course of things. The world is different because she lived. Like most of the very great people of the world, she was extremely cosmopolitan. She belongs to all nations and to all time. The work she did, the people she influenced, prove this. Her *Voice in the Desert* has been translated into most languages of Europe, and has spoken like the voice of a compatriot to the people of every land. She was a great leader of men and women, and a skilful and intrepid general of the battles she fought. As an orator she touched the hearts of her hearers as no one else has done to whom I have listened. She aimed at a perfectly definite object, but round that object there gathered in her mind many others, all converging to the same end. She left behind her wherever she went new thoughts and new aims and new ideals.

Around her central thought grew up many others, and a host of good works have been left in many countries as living memorials of her influence. She thus not only led a great crusade, but she helped to raise the characters of the individuals engaged in it.

But while I write of her public work, it would be but half the truth unless I said a word about her personally. She was at home in every class of society. She was very beautiful, and

of a very gracious presence, and the impression made by first seeing her and hearing her voice has, I expect, been forgotten by none who ever met her. She was of a very artistic temperament. She was a good painter, an extremely good musician. She was a bold rider, and active, though always of a somewhat weak health. Her industry and application was unbounded. She was very full of humour, and, while deeply in earnest, had the faculty of being at times charmingly gay. She dressed with great taste and simplicity. She, above all things, loved her home and her husband, and that love was wholly returned.

I have said she was extremely cosmopolitan, and all who have known her know how true that is. At the same time she was a great lover of her own country, and particularly of the borderland between England and Scotland, where she was born, and where she now lies buried in the churchyard of Kirknewton, where many of her ancestors lie. For she came of an old Border family; and bravery, and the alertness of battle, and the power of self-sacrifice, and the indignation against wrong which characterised her, came to her, perhaps, partly through her descent.

She was a great reader of the Bible, and a humble suppliant before the throne of God. But, while her own beliefs were clear and definite, she had no narrowness in her views, and the very names of those who have been her foremost supporters show how wide her sympathies were, and how acceptable she was to people of all creeds, as well as of all politics and of all climes.

She had to endure much, especially in the early stages of her

crusade – the averted glances of former friends, the brutal attacks of ignorant opponents – but the inspiration of a mighty purpose enabled her to rise above all that, and to preserve a serenity of mind and of manner through it all.

And now, what is the sum of it all? It seems to me to be this, that we must all be glad that she lived. We are each of us individually better, and the world as a whole is better, because she lived; and the seed that she has sown can never die.

JAMES STUART.

CHAPTER I.
DILSTON

Josephine Elizabeth Grey was born at Milfield Hill, in the county of Northumberland, on April 13th, 1828. She was the fourth daughter of John Grey, and of his wife Hannah Annett. In her Memoir of John Grey of Dilston, she writes thus of her birthplace and family.

It seems to me that any life of my father must include, to some extent, a history of the county in which he was born, lived and died. He loved the place of his birth, sweet Glendale. His affections were largely drawn out to that Border country; not only to the living beings who peopled it, but to the scenes themselves – the hills, the valleys, and the rivers. All through his life there will be found evidence of the heart-yearnings towards them; and these are shared by his children, to whom there seems no spot on earth like Glendale. This attachment to our native country is perhaps stronger among us than among some families, because for so many generations back we were rooted there. Greys abounded on the Borders; they were keepers often of the Border castles and towers, living a life not always very peaceful in regard to their Scottish neighbours.

Glendale is rich in romantic associations: every name in and around it brings to the mind some incident of war, or lover's

adventure, or heroic exploit recorded in English ballads, or sung to sweet Scottish tunes, or woven later into the poems of Sir Walter Scott. It is a very beautiful range of hills which skirts Glendale to the west; their very names, Yeavring Bell, Heathpool Bell, Newton Torr, Hetha, Hedgehope, and Cheviot – were delightful to my father's ear. Directly in front of our old home, Milfield Hill, lies the scene of innumerable fights between Scotch and English, Milfield Plain, and from its windows might have been seen the famous battle of Humbledon Hill.

Flodden Hill, about a mile north of Milfield Hill, hides beneath its soil traces of the great battle of 1513: broken pieces of armour of men and horses were sometimes dug or ploughed up, and brought to the house, to be treasured up as relics. Many a time did my father recite to his children every incident of that battle, as he rode or walked with them over Flodden, sometimes resting at the "King's Chair," or by "Sybil's Well." His memory was so good that he could go through almost the whole of *Marmion*, and other poems relating to that woeful day,

> When shivered was fair Scotland's spear,
> And broken was her shield.

His dislike of the Stuarts was great, but he would tell, with a sorrowful sympathy, how the "flowers of the forest," the noble youth of Scotland, "were a' wede away."

After the battle of Flodden the Border warfare degenerated

into a system of recriminative plunder, which continued till comparatively recent times. It is only a few generations back that our Northumbrians used to watch the fords all night long, with their trained mastiffs, to prevent the Scotch from carrying away their cattle. At one of the early meetings of the Highland Society at Kelso, my father said: "There was a time, and that at no distant period, when, had it been possible for such animals as we have seen to-day to exist, it would have required the escort of our honourable Vice-President, Sir John Hope, and his cavalry in bringing each lot to the show-ground, to secure it against the chance of being roasted among the heather of the Highlands or boiled in the pots of Cumberland."

But the time came for this fair Border country to wake up to new life. Probably no part of England has undergone so rapid a change as Northumberland has done in the last eighty or ninety years. The half-barbarous character which I have been describing clung to the people long after it had given place to civilisation elsewhere. The soil and climate were rugged, and resisted for a long time the first efforts at cultivation; but its inhabitants, rugged too, were energetic, and the impulse once given, it required not many years to place Northumberland at the head of agricultural progress.

The part which my father had in bringing about this great change in Northumberland, and in the progress of agriculture generally, was not inconsiderable. How great the change must have been, in a short time, those of us can imagine who have

witnessed the rich harvests of the last twenty years, and the merry harvest-homes on Tweedside and Tillside. Not less striking, perhaps, was the change brought about later on the banks of the Tyne. When he migrated thither in 1833, Tyneside, which is now so richly cultivated, presented in many parts miles of fox-cover and self-sown plantations of fir and birchwood.

John Grey was born in August, 1785. He was the son of George Grey, of West Ord, on the banks of the Tweed, and of his wife, Mary Burn. He himself thus writes of his ancestry, in answer to a question addressed to him by a friend.

"He [an antiquarian] imagines that he brings the Greys down from Rollo, whose daughter Arletta was mother of William the Conqueror; but I think their Norman origin is doubtful. Undoubtedly, however, they were derived from a long line of warriors, who were Wardens of the East Marches, Governors of Norham, Morpeth, Wark, and Berwick Castles in the old Border days, and were also dignified by great achievements in foreign wars. Sir John Grey, of Heaton, 1356, was valorous in the army of Henry V, and gained, or had conferred on him, castles in Normandy, and the title of Tankerville, which is now an offshoot of the old stock. His figure is given as a knight of great strength and renown, and he was distinguished by the capacious forehead which is said to have marked the race through all ages; see the late Charles Earl Grey for its full development. [The writer was not less remarkable for this feature than any who bore the name.] A son of Sir John Grey, Governor of Morpeth Castle 1656, gave

offence by a marriage with a buxom daughter of a farmer, at Angerton. In the records it is shown that he had an annuity from the family estate at Learmonth. From this offshoot comes our degenerate tribe!"

My mother's parents were good people, descended from the poor but honest families of silk-weavers, driven out of France by the revocation of the Edict of Nantes. They were in the habit of opening their hospitable doors to everyone in the form of a religious teacher, of whatever sect, who happened to pass that way. One of my mother's earliest memories was of being lifted upon the knee of the venerable John Wesley, a man with white silvery hair and a benevolent countenance, who placed his two hands upon the head of the golden-haired little girl and pronounced over her a tender and solemn benediction.

In 1833 John Grey was appointed to take charge of the Greenwich Hospital estates in his native county, and moved to a new house built for him at Dilston, in the vale of the Tyne.

Our home at Dilston was a very beautiful one. Its romantic historical associations, the wild, informal beauty all round its doors, the bright, large family circle, and the kind and hospitable character of its master and mistress, made it an attractive place to many friends and guests. Among our pleasantest visitors there were Swedes, Russians and French, who came to England on missions of agricultural or other inquiry, and who sometimes spent weeks with us. It was a house the door of which stood wide

open, as if to welcome all comers, through the livelong summer day (all the days seem like summer days when looking back). It was a place where one could glide out of a lower window and be hidden in a moment, plunging straight among wild wood paths and beds of fern, or find oneself quickly in some cool concealment, beneath slender birch trees, or by the dry bed of a mountain stream. It was a place where the sweet hushing sound of waterfalls, and clear streams murmuring over shallows, were heard all day and night, though winter storms turned those sweet sounds into an angry roar.

I have thought that the secret of my father's consistency lay in the fact that his opinions had their root very deep in his soul and affections, that they were indigenous, so to speak, not grafted from without. God made him a Liberal, and a Liberal in the true sense he continued to be to the end of his life. In conversation with him on any public questions, one could not but observe how much such questions were matters of feeling with him. I believe that his political principles and public actions were alike the direct fruit of that which held rule within his soul – I mean his large benevolence, his tender compassionateness, and his respect for the rights and liberties of the individual man. His life was a sustained effort for the good of others, flowing from these affections. He had no grudge against rank or wealth, no restless desire of change for its own sake, still less any rude love of demolition; but he could not endure to see oppression or wrong of any kind inflicted on man, woman, or child. "You

cannot treat men and women exactly as you do one pound bank-notes, to be used or rejected as you think proper," he said in a letter to *The Times*, when that paper was advocating some ill-considered changes, beneficial to one class, but leaving out of account a residue of humble folk upon whom they would entail great suffering. In the cause of any maltreated or neglected creature he was uncompromising to the last, and when brought into opposition with the perpetrators of any social injustice he became an enemy to be feared. Some who remembered him in early manhood have described his commanding presence when he stood forth on public occasions as the champion of Liberal principles, "unsubdued by the blandishments of his partisans, and unabashed by the rancour of his opponents." There was seldom to be found a flaw in his argument or a fault in his grammar on those occasions, when "he carried confusion and dismay into the enemy's camp." Yet the force which his hearers acknowledged lay in his love of truth, his clearness of judgment, and the known innocency of his life, rather than in rhetoric. The true key to an occasional bitterness against those whom he thought wrong-doers lay also in his great sensitiveness to wrong done. There was no self-satisfaction in his denunciation of evil; the contemplation of cruelty in any form was intolerable to him. He would speak of the imposition of social disabilities of any kind, by one class of persons on another, with kindling eyes and breath which came quickly; but he always turned away with a sense of relief from the subject of the evil-doers, or the evil done, to the persons who

suffered, whose position his compassionate instinct would set him at once to the task of ameliorating. His children remember the large old family Bible, which he used punctually to bring forth every Sunday afternoon and peruse for hours, and his appeals to them to listen to the grandeur of certain favourite passages, which he often read aloud. The Book of the Prophet Isaiah was a great favourite, and his love for such words as the following, which he often quoted, was an index of the complexion of his mind: "Is not this the fast that I have chosen? to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke?"

> The Greys were a loving family, but of all the family Josephine's life-long favourite was her sister Harriet, afterwards Madame Meuricoffre. In her she realised the perfect fulfilment of Christina Rossetti's lines —

> There is no friend like a sister
> In calm or stormy weather;
> To cheer one on the tedious way,
> To fetch one if one goes astray,
> To lift one if one totters down,
> To strengthen whilst one stands.

My sister Harriet and I were a pair, in our family of six daughters and three sons. We were never separated, except perhaps for a few days occasionally, until her marriage and departure from her own country for Naples. We were more, I

may venture to say, than many sisters are to each other; we were one in heart and soul, and one in all our pursuits. We walked, rode, played, and learned our lessons together. When one was scolded, both wept; when one was praised, both were pleased. In looking back to those early days, the characteristics which stand out the most in my memory are her love of free outdoor life, of nature, and of animals. It may be said that these are common to most country-born children, but they were very strongly marked in her.

Among the many good dogs who were personal friends in our family was one, Pincher, whom she loved much. She was sometimes missing when lesson hours came round, and would be found in Pincher's kennel, quite concealed from view, holding pleasant converse with her dear dog. A tragic event occurred. Twelve of our father's sheep were found one early morning cruelly worried and bleeding to death in the field. Suspicion fell on Pincher, although there were other dogs of the agents and farmers about, who were much more probably the criminals; but their masters preferred to impute the crime to our dog. Pincher was tried, condemned, and executed, he, poor dog, wagging his tail to the last, and offering his paw, in sign, my sister said through her tears, of forgiveness of his murderers. She was heart-broken, and cried herself to sleep many nights after, her persuasion of the injustice of the sentence making her sorrow very bitter. Trifling incidents often rest in the memory when important things are forgotten. I recall, some time after this, that when we were in the

schoolroom, drilled by a strict governess in close attention to our books, the silence was nevertheless broken by my sister's voice asking suddenly, and with a pathetic earnestness, "Miss M – , had Pincher a soul?" "Silence!" was the reply. "Attend to your books! No silly questions!" But this same question has arisen many a time in the hearts of both of us, when we have witnessed the death of those dear companions, and seen the dumb and almost awful appeal in their dying eyes, fixed upon those whom they loved with a love which seemed out of all proportion to the limitations of their being. The desired solution of the child's question, "Had Pincher a soul?" was a momentous one for her; but the child's heart was then, as often, little understood.

Her interest in animal life was not restricted to the nobler beasts. She made collections of creatures as low in the scale as newts and frogs and other aquatic and amphibious beings, declaring that they also were worthy of affection. We had our little beds side by side, and above them there was a shelf on which she arranged these creatures in rows of pots and jars filled with water. An accident occurred one night – the shelf gave way and emptied its burden of pots and jars and water and creatures into our beds. The incident rather damped my ardour in the pursuit of this branch of natural history, I believe, but not so with her. I recollect how tenderly she gathered up the newts, frogs, &c., and replaced them in fresh water, hoping they had got no harm. We had many pets – ferrets, wild cats from the woods, and owls. Some of the latter were magnificent people, with their large eyes

and look of profound wisdom worthy of the classic attendant of Pallas Athene. Ponies also we had. On one of these, a beautiful snow-white pony called Apple Grey, many of us had our first lessons in riding. My sister's ideal at one time of the vocation, which she would choose above others, was that of a circus girl, and in the hope of possibly realising some day that ideal, she began early to practise equestrian exercises. Putting off her shoes, she would leap on to the unsaddled back of Apple Grey, and standing up, guiding her only by the bridle, would essay to trot and then to canter round the fields. By perseverance, and after many falls, she had attained to some degree of excellence in these gymnastics, when her thoughts were turned in other directions than that of the vocation of a circus girl.

She wrote some years later of the death of this dear pony: "Poor old Apple was shot to-day by the side of her grave in the wood. They say she died in a moment. Papa could not give the order for execution, but the men took it on themselves, as she could scarcely eat or rise without help. It was the kindest thing to do. Think of the gallops and tumbles of our young days, and all her wisdom and all her charms! Emmy and I have got a large stone slab, on which Surtees the mason has carved, 'In memoriam, Apple,' and I shall beg a young weeping ash from Beaufront to plant on her grave.

Her right ear, that is filled with dust,
Hears little of the false or just

now, and if she is gone to the happy hunting grounds, so much the better for her, dear old pet."

We had our sorrows; clouds sometimes seemed to darken our horizon; and we would speak together in whispers of some family grief which was not wholly understood by us, or of certain things in the world which seemed to us even then to be not as they should be. We had a handsome brother, John, who used to entertain us in a gentle way with stories of the sea, which we loved to hear; and who on one occasion returned home with his pockets filled with young tortoises for us. He died at sea. We were awed by the grief of our father and mother. We reminded each other of Mrs. Hemans' *Graves of a Household*—

> He lies where pearls lie deep;
> He was the loved of all, yet none
> O'er his low bed may weep.

Later our eldest sister married and went out to China. Her letters from the Far East were read aloud in the family, and our curiosity and interest were immensely stirred by her descriptions of that country, of storms at sea, of the customs and ways of the people, of her visit to the house of a great Mandarin, &c. China seemed then much farther away than it seems now.

Living in the country, far from any town, and, if I may say so, in the pre-educational era (for women at least), we had none of the advantages which girls of the present day have. But we

owed much to our dear mother, who was very firm in requiring from us that whatever we did should be thoroughly done, and that in taking up any study we should aim at becoming as perfect as we could in it without external aid. This was a moral discipline which perhaps compensated in value for the lack of a great store of knowledge. She would assemble us daily for the reading aloud of some solid book, and by a kind of examination following the reading assured herself that we had mastered the subject. She urged us to aim at excellence, if not perfection, in at least one thing.

Our father's connection with great public movements of the day – the first Reform Bill, the Abolition of the Slave Trade and Slavery, and the Free Trade movement – gave us very early an interest in public questions and in the history of our country.

For two years my sister and I were together at a school in Newcastle. My sister did not love study, and confessed she "hated lessons." The lady at the head of the school regretted this. She was not a good disciplinarian, and gave us much liberty, which we appreciated, but she had a large heart and ready sympathy. In spite of the imperfectly learned lessons, she discerned in my sister some rare gifts – a spark of genius (a word which would have been strongly deprecated by my sister as applied to herself); and used furtively to gather up and preserve (we discovered afterwards) scraps of original writings of my sister, and copy books full of quaint pen-and-ink drawings. She also appropriated, and would privately show to friends, a book,

a *History of the Italian Republics*, on the margins of which throughout my sister had illustrated that history in a most original and humorous manner.

The following extract from one of Josephine Butler's last letters, written to friends in Switzerland in 1905, tells how her "travail of soul" on behalf of oppressed womanhood began at an early age when she was only seventeen.

My father was a man with a deeply rooted, fiery hatred of all injustice. The love of justice was a passion with him. Probably I have inherited from him this passion. My dear mother felt with him, and seconded all his efforts. When my father spoke to us, his children, of the great wrong of slavery, I have felt his powerful frame tremble and his voice would break. You can believe, that at that time sad and tragical recitals came to us from first sources of the hideous wrong inflicted on negro men and women. I say women, for I think their lot was particularly horrible, for they were almost invariably forced to minister to the worst passions of their masters, or be persecuted and die. I recollect the story of a negro woman who had four sons, the sons of her master. The three eldest were sold by the father in childhood for good prices, and the mother never knew their fate. She had one left, the youngest, her treasure. Her master, in a fit of passion, one day shot this boy dead. The mother crawled under a ruined shed of wood, and with her face to the earth she prayed that she might die. But first she prayed, for she was a Christian, that she might be able to forgive her cruel master. The words, "Love your

enemies, bless them that curse you," sounded in her heart; and she cried to heaven, "Jesus, help me to forgive!" And so she died, her poor heart broken. I remember how these things combined to break my young heart, and how keenly they awakened my feelings concerning injustice to women through this conspiracy of greed of gold and lust of the flesh, a conspiracy which has its counterpart in the white slave owning in Europe.

Something of her struggles at this period is shown in the following memories, recorded in 1900.

My early home was far from cities, with parents who taught by their lives what true men and women should be. Few "priests or pastors" ever came our way. Two miles from our home was the parish church, to which we trudged dutifully every Sunday, and where an honest man in the pulpit taught us loyally all that he probably himself knew about God, but whose words did not even touch the fringe of my soul's deep discontent.

It was my lot from my earliest years to be haunted by the problems which more or less present themselves to every thoughtful mind. Year after year this haunting became more tyrannous. The world appeared to me to be out of joint. A strange intuition was given to me whereby I saw as in a vision, before I had seen any of them with my bodily eyes, some of the saddest miseries of earth, the injustices, the inequalities, the cruelties practised by man on man, by man on woman.

For one long year of darkness the trouble of heart and brain urged me to lay all this at the door of the God, whose name

I had learned was Love. I dreaded Him – I fled from Him – until grace was given me to arise and wrestle, as Jacob did, with the mysterious Presence, who must either slay or pronounce deliverance. And then the great questioning again went up from earth to heaven, "God! Who art Thou? Where art Thou? Why is it thus with the creatures of Thy hand?" I fought the battle alone, in deep recesses of the beautiful woods and pine forests around our home, or on some lonely hillside, among wild thyme and heather, a silent temple where the only sounds were the plaintive cry of the curlew, or the hum of a summer bee, or the distant bleating of sheep. For hours and days and weeks in these retreats I sought the answer to my soul's trouble and the solution of its dark questionings. Looking back, it seems to me the end must have been defeat and death had not the Saviour imparted to the child wrestler something of the virtue of His own midnight agony, when in Gethsemane His sweat fell like great drops of blood to the ground.

It was not a speedy or an easy victory. Later the conflict was renewed, as there dawned upon me the realities of those earthly miseries which I had realised only in a measure by intuition; but later still came the outward and active conflict, with, thanks be to God, the light and hope and guidance which He never denies to them who seek and ask and knock, and which become for them as "an anchor of the soul, sure and steadfast."

Looking my Liberator in the face, can my friends wonder that I have taken my place, (I took it long ago) – oh! with what infinite

contentment! – by the side of her, the "woman in the city which was a sinner," of whom He, her Liberator and mine, said, as He can also say of me, "*this woman* hath not ceased to kiss My feet."

CHAPTER II.
OXFORD

No record of Josephine Butler's life would be at all true or complete which did not include some account of her husband. His strong and gentle spirit greatly influenced and aided her in all her public work, not only with whole-hearted sympathy, but with active co-operation whenever he had leisure from his other duties. The following pages are taken from her Recollections of George Butler.

In visiting some great picture gallery, and passing along amidst portraits innumerable of great men – of kings, statesmen, discoverers, authors or poets – I have sometimes been attracted above all by a portrait without a name, or without the interest attaching to it of any recorded great exploit, but which, nevertheless interests for its own sake. Something looks forth from those eyes – something of purity, of sincerity, of goodness – which draws the beholder to go back again and again to that portrait, and which gives it a lasting place in the memory long after many other likenesses of earth's heroes are more or less forgotten. It is somewhat in this way that I think of a memorial or written likeness of George Butler, if it can but be presented with a simplicity and fidelity worthy of its subject. His character – his singlemindedness, purity, truth, and firmness of attachment to

those whom he loved – seem to me worthy to be recorded and to be had in remembrance.

M. Fallot, in the *Revue du Christianisme Pratique*, sketches in a few words the character of the revered teacher of his youth, Christophe Dieterlin, whose mortal remains rest beneath the hallowed soil of the Ban de la Roche, in the Vosges, surmounted by a rock of mountain granite – a suitable monument for such a man. When his pupil questioned him concerning prayer, he replied: "The Lord's Prayer is in general sufficient for me. When praying in these words, all my personal preoccupations become mingled with and lost in the great needs and desires of the whole human race." "He was a Christian," says M. Fallot, "*hors cadre*, refractory to all classification, living outside all parties," a child of Nature and a son of God. These words might with truth be applied to the character of George Butler. It would be difficult to assign him a definite place in any category of persons or parties. He stands apart, *hors cadre*, in his gentleness and simplicity, and in a certain sturdy and immovable independence of character.

George Butler was born at Harrow on the 11th of June, 1819. He was the eldest son of a family of ten – four brothers and six sisters. Nothing very remarkable in the way of hard study or distinction can be recorded of him during his school career. When questioned in later life concerning any excellency he attained there, he would answer, reflectively, that he was considered to be extremely good at "shying" stones. He could hit or knock over certain high-up and difficult chimney-pots with

wonderful precision, to the envy of other mischievous boys, and I suppose to the annoyance of the owners of the chimney-pots. His father, the Dean of Peterborough, wrote to me in 1852: "Your references to George's early days make me feel quite young again. He certainly was a nice-looking boy, and had a pretty head of hair; at least I thought so, and the remembrance of those nursery days is pleasant to me. But oh! those early experiments in the science of projectiles upon the chimney-pots of the Harrovian neighbours – why remind me of them, unless you are yourself possessed of the same spirit of mischief?"

But school life was not all play for George Butler. He showed an early aptitude for scholarship, gaining among several prizes that for Greek Iambics. In the autumn of 1838 George went up to Trinity College, Cambridge. During the year he spent at Cambridge the sense of duty and of responsibility for the use of opportunities and gifts which he possessed lay dormant within him. Those who loved him best often thanked God, however, as he did himself in later life, that he had escaped the contamination of certain influences which leave a stain upon the soul, and sometimes tend to give a serious warp to the judgment of a man in regard to moral questions. A remarkable native purity of mind, and a loyal and reverent feeling towards women, saved him from associations and actions which, had he ever yielded to them, would have been a bitter memory to such a man as he was. In the interval between leaving Cambridge and going to Oxford he spent several months in the house of Mr. Augustus Short

(afterwards Bishop of Adelaide). It was while under his roof that he imbibed a true love of work, and learned the enjoyment of overcoming difficulties, and of a steady effort, without pause, towards a definite goal.

One of his life-long and most valued friends, the Rev. Cowley Powles, writes: "It was, I think, in 1841 that Butler got the Hertford Scholarship. I remember meeting him just after his success had been announced. I was coming back from a ride, and he stopped me and said: 'I have got the Hertford.' The announcement was made in his quietest voice, and with no elation of manner, though his countenance showed how much he was pleased. Never was there a man with less *brag* about him." In 1843 George Butler took his degree, having obtained a first class. He kept up his connection very closely with Oxford for four years, making use of the time for various studies, and taking pupils or reading parties during the long vacations. In 1848 he was appointed to a Tutorship at the University of Durham, which he retained for a little more than two years. It was during the latter part of his residence there that I first made his acquaintance.

The following, written after our engagement, shows his extreme honesty of character, while it indicates in some faint degree his just and unselfish view of what the marriage relation should be; namely, a perfectly equal union, with absolute freedom on both sides for personal initiative in thought and action and for individual development.

"I do not ask you to write oftener. I would have you follow

the dictates of your own heart in this; but be always certain that whatever comes from you is thrice welcome. I write because I feel it to be necessary to my happiness. I have lately written to you out of the fulness of my heart, when my soul was deeply moved to strive after a higher life. But often my letters will be about trifling matters, so that you may be tempted to say, 'Why write at all?' Yet, after all, life is largely made up of trifles. Moreover, I do not wish to invest myself in borrowed plumes. I do not want you to find out later that I am much like other people, perhaps even more commonplace than most. I would rather your eyes were opened at once. I cannot reproach myself with ever having assumed a character not my own to you or to anyone. Such impostures are always too deeply purchased by the loss of self-respect. But I fear that you may have formed too high an estimate of my character – one to which I can never come up; and for your sake I would wish to remove every veil and obstacle which might prevent your seeing me just as I am. If I were only to write to you when my better feelings were wrought upon, you might think me much better than I am, so I will write to you on every subject and in every mood. Those lines which I sent to you gave no exaggerated picture. I have often felt in a very different spirit to that in which we should say 'Our Father.' The praying for particular blessings, which is enjoined by the words of the Lord Jesus, 'Ask, and ye shall receive,' has appeared to me at times as derogatory to the omniscient and all-provident character of God. Can He, I have thought, alter the smallest of His dispensations at

the request of such a weak and insignificant being as I am? This vain philosophy, the offspring of intellectual pride, has had more to do with blighting my faith than wilful sin or the world's breath! But though I have 'wandered out of the way in the wilderness,' I do not despair of taking possession of the promised land. You say you can do so little for me. Will it be little, Josephine, if, urged by your encouragement and example, I put off the works of darkness and put on the armour of light? Blessings from the Giver of all blessings fall upon you for the joy you have given to me, for the new life to which you have called me! I should think it undue presumption in me to suggest anything to you in regard to your life and duties. He who has hitherto guided your steps will continue to do so. Believe me, I value the expression of your confidence and affection above 'pearls and precious stones'; but I must not suffer myself to be dazzled, or to fancy that I have within me that power of judging and acting aright which would alone authorise me to point out to you any path in which you ought to walk. I am more content to leave you to walk by yourself in the path you shall choose; but I know that I do not leave you alone and unsupported, for *His* arm will guide, strengthen and protect you. I only pray, then, that you may be more and more conformed to the image of Him who set us a perfect example, and that He will dispose my heart to love and admire most those things in you which are most admirable and lovely."

During the years 1848-49 the Dean of Peterborough frequently wrote to his son expressing his desire to see him

turning his mind towards the ministry – hoping that he would decide on taking orders. The Dean was sincerely convinced that there was nothing which ought to make his son hesitate to take so serious a step, and that the duties of a clergyman would have a beneficial effect on his character, tending to his highest good and happiness. That, however, was far from being his son's view of the matter. While appreciating his father's motives in urging him in this direction, and replying in general terms with a gentle courtesy, he seems to have felt convinced that it was impossible for him to follow his advice in the matter. Finally he wrote: "I thank you, my dear father, for your welcome letter. I think I have already told you that I have no internal call to, nor inclination for, the Church. On the contrary, I should feel I was guilty of a wrong action if I embarked in any work or profession for neither the theoretical nor the practical part of which I had any taste. And if this be true of ordinary professions, is it not so in a tenfold degree in the case of the Church? I feel at present no attraction towards the study of dogmatical theology, or any branch of study in which a clergyman should be versed; and I cannot get over the scruples I have against such a step as you advise. I am at present engaged, usefully I hope, in a place of Christian education, closely connected with a cathedral church, with abundant opportunities of adding to my stock of knowledge in various subjects, as well as of imparting to others what I know. I do not see, at present, any necessity for planning any change in my mode of life."

How was it then, it may be asked, that he did actually elect to become a clergyman some six years later? The answer is, he had gradually become convinced that the work of his life was to be educational, and the desire arose in his mind to be able to stand towards the younger men or boys who should come under his care in the position of their pastor as well as their teacher. He weighed the matter gravely for a long time before becoming a clergyman; but after having taken the step, he never repented of having done so. To the end of his life, however, his character continued to be essentially that of a layman. In 1851 he wrote: —

"You know that I don't like parsons; but that is not to the point. If I should ever take orders, I don't mean to be a mere parson; for if I were like some of them whom I know I should cease to be a *man*. I shall never wear straight waistcoats, long coats and stiff collars! I think all dressing up and official manner are an affectation; while great strictness in outward observances interferes with the devotion of the heart; and though it may indicate a pious spirit – and therefore deserves our respect – it shows, as I think, a misconception of the relation in which we stand to God, and of the duties we owe to man. It seems to me, after all, that being a good clergyman is much the same thing as being a good man. I have a longing to be of use, and I know of no line in which I can be more useful than the educational, my whole life having been turned more or less in this direction. It is a blessed office that of a teacher. With all its troubles and heart-wearyings and disappointments, yet it is full of delight to those

who enter upon it with their whole heart and soul, and in reliance upon our great Teacher. I know of no occupation which more carries its present reward with it."

Our marriage took place on the 8th of January, 1852, at Dilston. Shortly afterwards we settled at Oxford, which became our home for five years. In reviewing the work done by George Butler in the course of his educational career, one cannot but be struck by the fact that he was somewhat in advance of his time. There are men theoretically in advance of their times, who do good service by their advocacy of progressive principles in writing or in speech. With him it was more a matter of simple practice. He perceived that some study useful or necessary for the future generations, and in itself worthy, had scarcely an acknowledged place in the curriculum of the schools and universities, or that some new ground necessary to be explored was still left untrodden; and without saying much about it, without any thought of being himself a pioneer in any direction, he modestly set himself to the task of acting out his thoughts on the subject. His absolute freedom from personal vanity withheld him from proclaiming that he was about to enter on any new line, and at the same time enabled him to bear with perfect calm, if not with indifference, the criticisms, witty remarks and sometimes serious opposition which are seldom wanting when a man or woman ventures quietly to encroach upon the established order of things in any department of life. At Oxford he was the first who brought into prominence the study of geography. His

geographical lectures there were quite an innovation, creating some amusement and a good deal of wonder as to how he would succeed. It was a subject which had hitherto been relegated in an elementary form to schools for boys and girls, and was unrecognised, except by a very few persons, as the grand and comprehensive scientific study which it is now acknowledged to be.

At Oxford the subject was entirely new, at least to the older members of the university, who, however, to their credit, came to the lectures, and listened with teachable minds to truths novel to them concerning the world they were living in. We drew large illustrative maps for the walls of the lecture room. I recall a day when I was drawing in a rough form an enlarged map of Europe, including the northern coast of Africa and a part of Asia Minor. It happened that several fellows and tutors of colleges called at that moment. I continued my work while they chatted with him on the curiosity of his introduction in Oxford of so elementary a study. The conversation then turned on letters we had just received from Arthur Stanley and Theodore Walrond, who were visiting Egypt. "Where is Cairo?" someone asked, turning to the map spread on the table. I put the question to an accomplished college tutor. His eye wandered hopelessly over the chart. He could not even place his hand on Egypt! I was fain to pretend that I needed to study my performance more closely, and bent down my head in order to conceal the irreverent laughter which overcame me.

George Butler was one of the first, also, who introduced and

encouraged the study of Art in Oxford in a practical sense. In the winter of 1852-53 he obtained the permission of the Vice-Chancellor and Curators to give a course of lectures on Art in the Taylor building. These lectures were afterwards published by J. W. Parker, under the title of *Principles of Imitative Art*. While promoting the study of Art in Oxford, working with pupils, and examining in the schools, he undertook to write a series of Art criticisms for the *Morning Chronicle* and afterwards for another paper, visiting for this purpose the galleries and yearly exhibitions in London. This he did for a year or two.

"It was amusing," he wrote to his mother, after his first visit in this capacity to the Society of British Artists, "to see the 'gentlemen of the press' (of whom I was one!) walking about dotting down observations. I travelled up to town with Scott, the architect, who has engaged me to attend a meeting of his workmen, and give them an address on 'Decorative Art and the Dignity of Labour.' Josephine and I are both engaged in copying some drawings by Turner in the Taylor Gallery."

Indefatigable in his efforts to master any subject which attracted him, he was also equally ready and anxious to impart to others any knowledge he had thus gained. He found time among his other occupations to make a very thorough study of some ancient Oscan inscriptions, with engravings of their principal monuments, which he found in the Bodleian Library. He became much interested in that portion of history – almost lost in the mists of the past – which is illustrated by the marvellous records

and monuments of Oscan, Umbrian, and Etruscan life in the great museum at Bologna. He worked at and completed, during one of the long vacations, a series of enlarged copies in sepia of the small engravings and prints of these monuments in the Bodleian. These enlargements were suitable for wall illustrations, for a set of lectures which he afterwards gave on the "Ancient Races of Italy." It was very pleasant to us when we visited Florence together, some years later, to see the originals of some of the Cyclopean ruins of which we had together made large drawings, those gigantic stones of all that remains of the ancient Etruscan walls of Fiesole, up to the lovely heights of which we drove one clear, bright winter's day.

I have many other memories of our life at Oxford – some very sweet, others grave. I recall with special pleasure our summer evening rides. During the first two years we spent there my father kindly provided me with a horse, a fine, well-bred chestnut. My husband and I explored together all the rising grounds round Oxford. Behind our own little garden there were tall trees where nightingales sang night and day for a few weeks in spring. But it was in the Bagley Woods and in Abingdon Park that those academic birds put forth all their powers. We sometimes rode from five in the afternoon till the sun set and the dew fell, on grassy paths between thick undergrowths of woods such as nightingales love to haunt, and from which issued choruses of matchless song.

Our Italian studies were another source of enjoyment. Dante

Rossetti was then preparing matter for his book, *Dante and His Circle*, by carefully translating into English the *Vita Nuova* and lyrical poems of Dante, together with other sonnets and poems written by some of his predecessors, such as Cavalcante, Orlandi and Angiolieri of Siena. Mr. Rossetti sent to us occasionally for criticism some of his translations of the exquisite sonnets of Dante, the English of which he was anxious to make as perfect as possible. We had visited Rossetti's studio at Chelsea, where he had shown us his portfolios of original sketches for his great paintings, besides many unfinished drawings and pathetic incidents expressed in artist's shorthand – slight but beautiful pencil designs. My husband's critical faculty and classical taste enabled him to return the sonnets submitted to his judgment with occasional useful comments. There was little to find fault with in them, however.

Aurelio Saffi was at this time in exile and living in Oxford. He had been associated with Mazzini and Armellini in the Triumvirate which ruled in Rome for a short period, and was parliamentary deputy for his own native town of Forli. He was a cultivated and literary man, with a thorough knowledge of the Italian poets. As an exile his material means were at that time very slender. My husband sought his acquaintance, and invited him to give a series of evening lectures on Dante in our own drawing-room. These were attractive to some, and increased the personal interest felt in Saffi in the university. Twenty-seven years later, having returned to Italy from exile,

Saffi was presiding at a great congress in Genoa where we were. He alluded, with much feeling, to the years he had spent in Oxford; and turning to my husband, who was near him, he said: "It is twenty-seven years to-day that, an exile from my native land, I had the happiness of being received in your house at Oxford, and I have never forgotten, and shall never forget, the hospitable and gracious reception given to me by you and your worthy companion. The times are changed; a long interval has elapsed, and it is to me a great joy to-day to greet you once more, and on my native soil."

But this pleasant life at Oxford had its shadow side. I had come from a large family circle, and from free country life to a university town – a society of celibates, with little or no leaven of family life; for Oxford was not then what it is now under expanded conditions, with its married fellows and tutors, its resident families, its ladies' colleges, and its mixed, general social life. With the exception of the families of a few heads of houses, who lived much secluded within their college walls, there was little or no home life, and not much freedom of intercourse between the academical portion of the community and others. A one-sidedness of judgment is apt to be fostered by such circumstances – an exaggeration of the purely masculine judgment on some topics, and a conventual mode of looking at things.

In the frequent social gatherings in our drawing-room in the evenings there was much talk, sometimes serious and weighty,

sometimes light, interesting, critical, witty and brilliant, ranging over many subjects. It was then that I sat silent, the only woman in the company, and listened, sometimes with a sore heart; for these men would speak of things which I had already revolved deeply in my own mind, things of which I was convinced, which I knew, though I had no dialectics at command with which to defend their truth. A few remarks made on those evenings stand out in my memory. They may seem slight and unimportant, but they had a significance for me, linking themselves, as they did, to long trains of thought which for some years past had been tending to form my own convictions.

A book was published at that time by Mrs. Gaskell, and was much discussed. This led to expressions of judgment which seemed to me false – fatally false. A moral lapse in a woman was spoken of as an immensely worse thing than in a man; there was no comparison to be formed between them. A pure woman, it was reiterated, should be absolutely ignorant of a certain class of evils in the world, albeit those evils bore with murderous cruelty on other women. One young man seriously declared that he would not allow his own mother to read such a book as that under discussion – a book which seemed to me to have a very wholesome tendency, though dealing with a painful subject. Silence was thought to be the great duty of all on such subjects. On one occasion, when I was distressed by a bitter case of wrong inflicted on a very young girl, I ventured to speak to one of the wisest men – so esteemed – in the university, in the hope that he

would suggest some means, not of helping her, but of bringing to a sense of his crime the man who had wronged her. The sage, speaking kindly however, sternly advocated silence and inaction. "It could only do harm to open up in any way such a question as this. It was dangerous to arouse a sleeping lion." I left him in some amazement and discouragement, and for a long time there echoed in my heart the terrible prophetic words of the painter-poet Blake – rude and indelicate as he may have been judged then – whose prophecy has only been averted by a great and painful awakening —

> The harlot's curse, from street to street,
> Shall weave old England's winding-sheet.

Every instinct of womanhood within me was already in revolt against certain accepted theories in society, and I suffered as only God and the faithful companion of my life could ever know. Incidents occurred which brought their contribution to the lessons then sinking into our hearts. A young mother was in Newgate for the murder of her infant, whose father, under cover of the death-like silence prescribed by Oxford philosophers – a silence which is in fact a permanent endorsement of injustice – had perjured himself to her, had forsaken and forgotten her, and fallen back, with no accusing conscience, on his easy, social life, and possibly his academic honours. I wished to go and speak to her in prison of the God who saw the injustice done, and who

cared for her. My husband suggested that we should write to the chaplain of Newgate, and ask him to send her to us when her sentence had expired. We wanted a servant, and he thought that she might be able to fill that place. She came to us. I think she was the first of the world of unhappy women of a humble class whom he welcomed to his own home. She was not the last.

A travelling circus came to the neighbourhood. A young woman who performed as an acrobat somehow conveyed to us her longing desire to leave the life in which she was plunged, the most innocent part of which was probably her acrobatic performances. She had aspirations very far beyond what is usually expected from a circus woman. She wanted to serve God. She saw a light before her, she said, and she must follow it. She went secretly to churches and chapels, and then she fled – she did not know where – but was recaptured. It was a Sunday evening in hot summer weather. I had been sitting for some time at my open window to breathe more freely the sultry air, and it seemed to me that I heard a wailing cry somewhere among the trees in the twilight which was deepening into night. It was a woman's cry – a woman aspiring to heaven and dragged back to hell – and my heart was pierced with pain. I longed to leap from the window, and flee with her to some place of refuge. It passed. I cannot explain the nature of the impression, which remains with me to this day; but beyond that twilight, and even in the midst of the pitiful cry, there seemed to dawn a ray of light and to sound a note not wholly of despair. The light was far off, yet

coming near, and the slight summer breeze in those tall trees had in them a whisper of the future. But when the day dawned it seemed to show me again more plainly than ever the great wall of prejudice, built up on a foundation of lies, which surrounded a whole world of sorrows, griefs, injustices and crimes which must not be spoken of – no, not even in whispers – and which it seemed to me then that no human power could ever reach or remedy. And I met again the highly-educated, masculine world in our evening gatherings more than ever resolved to hold my peace – to speak little with men, but much with God. No doubt the experience of those years influenced in some degree my maturer judgment of what is called "*educated* public opinion."

My motive in writing these recollections is to tell what *he* was – my husband – and to show how, besides all that he was in himself and all the work he did, which was wholly and especially his own, he was of a character to be able from the first to correct the judgment and soothe the spirit of the companion of his life when "the waters had come in even unto her soul." I wish to show, also, that he was even more to me in later life than a wise and noble supporter and helper in the work which may have been called more especially my own. He had a part in the creation of it, in the formation of the first impulses towards it. Had that work been purely a product of the feminine mind, of a solitary, wounded and revolted heart, it would certainly have lacked some elements essential to its becoming in any way useful or fruitful. But for him I should have been much more perplexed

than I was. The idea of justice to women, of equality between the sexes, and of equality of responsibility of all human beings to the moral law, seems to have been instinctive in him. He never needed convincing. He had his convictions already from the first – straight, just and clear. I did not at that time speak much, but whenever I spoke to him the clouds lifted. It may seem a little strange to say so, but, if I recall it truly, what helped me most of all at that time was, not so much any arguments he may have used in favour of an equal standard, but the correctness with which he measured the men and the judgments around him. I think there was even a little element of disdain in his appreciation of the one-sided judgments of some of his male friends. He used to say, "I am sorry for So-and-So," which sounded to me rather like saying, "I am sorry for Solomon," my ideas of the wisdom of learned men being, perhaps, a little exaggerated. He would tell me that I ought to pity them. "They know no better, poor fellows." This was a new light for me, I had thought of Oxford as the home of learning and of intellect. I thought the good and gifted men we daily met must be in some degree authorities on spiritual and moral questions. It had not occurred to me to think of them as "poor fellows!" That blessed gift of common sense, which he possessed in so large a degree, came to the rescue to restore for me the balance of a mind too heavily weighted with sad thoughts of life's perplexing problems. And then in the evenings, when our friends had gone, we read together the words of Life, and were able to bring many earthly notions and theories to the test

of what the Holy One and the Just said and did. Compared with the accepted axioms of the day, and indeed of centuries past, in regard to certain vital questions, the sayings and actions of Jesus were, we confessed to one another, revolutionary. George Butler was not afraid of revolution. In this sense he desired it, and we prayed together that a holy revolution might come about, and that the Kingdom of God might be established on the earth. And I said to myself: "And it is a man who speaks to me thus – an intelligent, a gifted man, a learned man too, few more learned than he, and a man who ever speaks the truth from his heart." So I was comforted and instructed. It was then that I began to see his portrait given, and I see it still more clearly now as I look back over his whole past life, in the 15th Psalm: "Lord, who shall dwell in Thy tabernacle? Or who shall rest upon Thy holy hill? Even he that leadeth an uncorrupt life, and doeth the thing which is right, and speaketh the truth from his heart. He that hath used no deceit in his tongue, nor done evil to his neighbour, and hath not slandered his neighbour. He that setteth not by himself, but is lowly in his own eyes, and maketh much of them that fear the Lord. He that sweareth unto his neighbour, and disappointeth him not, even though it were to his own hindrance."

The winter floods which so often surrounded Oxford during the years of which I am writing are probably remembered with a shudder by others besides myself. The mills and locks, and other impediments to the free flow of the waters of the Isis, were, I believe, long ago removed, and the malarial effect of

the stagnation of moisture around the city ceased with its cause. But at that time Oxford in winter almost resembled Venice, in its apparent isolation from the land, and in the appearance of its towers and spires reflected in the mirror of the floods. "It rained," wrote George in January, 1856, "all yesterday, and to-day it is cold and damp. Indeed, immediately after sunset the atmosphere of Oxford resembles that of a well, though that is scarcely so bad as the horrible smell of the meadows when the floods are retiring. Then one is conscious of a miasma which only a strong constitution can long resist."

My health failed. I became weak and liable to attacks of chills and fever. We drove out occasionally to the heights above Oxford, to reach which we were obliged to pursue for some distance a road which resembled a sort of high level or causeway (as in Holland) with water on each side. Looking back from the higher ground, the view of the academic city sitting upon the floods was very picturesque. Indeed, the sound of "Great Tom" knelling the curfew from his tower had a very musical and solemn effect as it came over the still waters, resembling a little in pathos the sound of a human voice giving warning of the approach of night; or, like Dante's *Squilla di lontana*—

> The distant bell
> Which seems to weep the dying day;

but poetry and sentiment could not hold out against rheumatic

pains and repeated chills.

I spent several months of that year – 1856 – in Northumberland with our children, my husband joining us after he had completed his engagements as a public examiner in London. His letters, during the few weeks of our separation, seemed to show a deepening of spiritual life – such as is sometimes granted in the foreshadowing of the approach of some special discipline or sorrow. He seems to have felt more deeply during this summer that he must not reckon on the unbroken continuance of the outward happiness which had been so richly granted to us.

To Mrs. Grey.
Oxford, June 6th, 1856.

"I am glad to feel that my treasures are in such good hands and life-giving air. I hope their presence at Dilston will contribute to the assurance that marriage is not a severance of family ties, but that both Josephine and I revert with the fondest attachment to old scenes and dearly loved friends at Dilston."

To his wife.

June, 1856.

"I am grieved to hear of your sufferings; but you write so cheerfully, and express such a loving confidence in One who is able to heal all our sicknesses, that I dare not repine. However sad at heart I may sometimes feel about you, I will

try to bring myself face to face with those mighty promises which are held out to those who 'rest in the Lord and wait patiently for Him.' And then I hope we shall still be able to go hand in hand in our work on earth."

To his wife.

July 13th, 1856.

"I have been reading Tennyson's 'Maud,' and correcting my review of it for *Fraser's Magazine*. Reading love stories which end in death or separation makes me dwell the more thankfully on my own happiness. It is no wonder that I am sanguine in all circumstances, and that I trust the love and care of our Almighty Father, for has He not blessed me far beyond my deserts in giving me such a share of human happiness as falls to the lot of few? Yet He has given us our thorn in the flesh, in your failing health, and our uncertain prospects. But these shall never hinder our love; rather we will cling to that more closely as the symbol and earnest of the heavenly love which displayed itself in that wondrous act – on Calvary – which the wise men of this world may deem of as they will, but which to us will ever be the most real of all realities, and the sure token of our reconciliation with God.

"I think we are well fitted to help each other. No words can express what you are to me. On the other hand, I may be able to cheer you in moments of sadness and despondency, when the evils of this world press heavily upon you, and your strength is not sufficient to enable you to rise up and *do* anything to relieve them, as you fain would

> do. And by means of possessing greater physical strength, and considerable power of getting through work, I may be enabled to help you in the years to come, to carry out plans which may under His blessing do some good, and make men speak of us with respect when we are laid in our graves; and in the united work of bringing up our children, may God so help us that we may be able to say, 'Of those whom Thou gavest us have we lost none.'"

While exercising much self-denial and reserve in making such extracts as the above, I give these few as affording glimpses of his inner mind and deep affection; for his character would be very inadequately portrayed if so prominent a feature of it were concealed as that of his love for his wife, and the constant blending of that love with all his spiritual aspirations and endeavours. That love was part of his being, becoming ever more deep and tender as the years went on. I have spoken of the strength and tenacity of his friendships. These qualities entered equally into his closest domestic relations. In the springtime of life, men dream, speak, write and sing of love – of love's gracious birth and beautiful youth. But it is not in the springtime of life that love's deepest depths can be fathomed, its vastness measured, and its endurance tested. There is a love which surmounts all trial and discipline, all the petty vexations and worries, as well as the sorrows and storms of life, and which flows on in an ever deepening current of tenderness, enhanced by memories of the past and hopes of the future – of the eternal life towards which it is tending. It was such a love as this, that

dwelt and deepened in him of whom I write to the latest moment of his earthly life, to be perfected in the Divine presence.

On joining us at Dilston, an arrangement was made with the vicar of the parish of Corbridge (in which Dilston was situated) that he should take his duty, occupying his house for the autumn, during his absence from home. Dissent prevailed largely in the neighbourhood. But during the time that he acted as the clergyman of the parish the church was well filled. Many Wesleyans came, who had not before entered its doors, as well as several families of well-to-do and well-instructed Presbyterian farmers – shrewd people, well able to maintain their ground in a theological controversy. They were attracted, no doubt, partly by the relationship of the temporary minister to my father, who was so much beloved and esteemed throughout the county, and a constant worshipper in the village church, and partly by the simple Christian teaching for which they thirsted, and which they now found. There was little real poverty. We visited the people sometimes together, and their affections were strongly gained.

Our return to Oxford was not auspicious. The autumn fell damp and cold. It was decided that I should go to London to consult Sir James Clarke, on account of what seemed the development of a weakness of the lungs. I recall the tender solicitude which my husband showed for me on the journey, and also the kindness of the venerable physician. I was scarcely able to rise to greet him when he entered the room. At the close of our interview he merely said, "Poor thing, poor thing! You must

take her away from Oxford." We proposed to return therefore at once to make necessary preparations for the change, when he interposed, "No, she must not return to the chilling influence of those floods, not for a single day."

This was no light trial. Our pleasant home must be broken up; all the hopes and plans my husband had cherished abandoned; the house he had taken and furnished at some expense as a Hall for unattached students thrown on his hands. To carry it on alone, to be separated for an indefinite time from each other, was scarcely possible. There seemed for the present no alternative. He accepted calmly, though not without keen regret, what was clearly inevitable. The difficulties of our position were for a time increased by a serious reverse of fortune experienced by my father, who had always been ready to aid on occasion the different members of the family. There had occurred a complete collapse of a bank in which he was a large shareholder. The loss he sustained was great. The spirit in which he bore the trial raised him still higher in the estimation of those who already so highly valued and admired him. Trouble followed upon trouble for a time, and my husband suffered all the more because of some inward self-reproach for having failed to exercise sufficient providence and foresight in the past. His greatest anxiety was for me; but that happily was gradually lightened as time went on.

Through the kindness of his friend, Mr. Powles, my husband was called to take temporarily the charge of a chapel at Blackheath, in the summer of 1857, which gave him useful

and congenial ministerial work while continuing his literary pursuits. He had gone on in advance to arrange for our removal to Blackheath.

To her husband.
St. Barnabas Day,
June 11th, 1857.

God bless you to-day and always, and make you a "Son of Consolation" to many in the time to come, as you have been to me. Earthly success is no longer our aim. What I desire above all for you is the fulfilment of the promise: "They that are wise shall shine as the light, and they that turn many to righteousness, as the stars for ever and ever." I had an encouraging conversation yesterday with – , which fell in with the train of my thoughts regarding you and myself. She said she had seen many cases in which individual chastening had preceded a life of great usefulness, though the subject of the chastening had thought at the time that his life was passing away, wasted or only spent in learning the lesson of submission. She thought that those to whom the discipline of life comes early rather than late ought to thank God; for it makes them better able to minister to others, and to walk humbly with their God. May that be the case with us. The little boys remembered your birthday before they were out of bed this morning, and have made an excursion to Nightingale Valley in honour of it.

CHAPTER III.
CHELTENHAM

In the autumn of 1857 my husband was invited to fill the post of Vice-Principal of the Cheltenham College. He accepted the invitation, and we went to Cheltenham the same year. He here entered upon his long course of assiduous and untiring work as a schoolmaster – a work which covered a quarter of a century, beginning at Cheltenham in 1857, and continued at Liverpool from the winter of 1865-66 until 1882. We gained much at Cheltenham in an improved climate, and in the cessation of material difficulties and anxieties. We lived in a large house, in which, for some years, we received a number of pupils. It was characteristic that it should have supplied some of the best athletes of the College, and many successful competitors in the school games, in feats of strength, activity and skill. My husband considered physical training to be an essential part of the education of youth.

Our summer vacations continued to be spent largely at Dilston; we went however one year to Switzerland with our eldest son. We visited Lucerne and its neighbourhood, and afterwards the Rhone Valley, Chamounix, and the great St. Bernard, passing a night at the hospice, where we profited much by our intercourse with the beautiful dogs, one of whom, a veteran called Bruno,

the forefather of many a noble hound, attached himself to us, and made himself our cicerone among the rocks in the desolate surroundings of the monastery. Another summer excursion was, with two of our children, to the Lakes of Killarney, including a visit to my brother, Charles Grey, who lived then in a house of Lord Derby, at Ballykisteen, in the "golden vale" of Tipperary. In both these years my husband brought home many sketches. The grey rocks skirting the borders of Killarney lakes, with their richly-coloured covering of arbutus and other flowering trees and evergreens, were tempting subjects for water-colours.

My father had been a friend of Clarkson, and a practical worker in the movement for the abolition of the slave trade. When the War of Secession in America broke out, my husband's sympathies were warmly enlisted on behalf of those who desired the emancipation of the slaves, and he perceived that that was indeed the question, the vital question of justice, which lay at the root of all that terrible struggle. This was one of several occasions in our united life in which we found ourselves in a minority; members of a group at first so insignificant that it scarcely found a voice or a hearing anywhere, but whose position was afterwards fully justified by events. It was a good training in swimming against the tide, or at least in standing firm and letting the tide go by, and in maintaining, while doing so, a charitable attitude towards those who conscientiously differed, and towards the thousands who float contentedly down the stream of the fashionable opinion of the day. In this case the feeling of isolation

on a subject of such tragic interest was often painful; but the discipline was useful, for it was our lot again more emphatically in the future to have to accept and endure this position for conscience' sake.

I recollect the sudden revulsion of feeling when the news was telegraphed of the assassination of President Lincoln; the extraordinary rapidity of the change of front of the "leading journal;" and the self-questionings among many whose intelligence and goodness had certainly given them the right to think for themselves, but who had not availed themselves of that right. I remember the penitence of *Punch*, who had been among the scoffers against the abolitionists of slavery, and who now put himself into deep mourning, and gave to the public an affecting cartoon of the British Lion bowed and weeping before the bier of Lincoln. A favourite scripture motto of my husband's was, "*Why do ye not of yourselves judge that which is right*?" But he was not argumentative. He loved peace, and avoided every heated discussion. His silence was, perhaps, sometimes not less effectual by way of rebuke or correction of shallow judgments than speech would have been. Goldwin Smith, one of the few at Oxford who saw at that time the inner meanings of the American struggle, paid us a visit. It occurred to us, while listening to some pointed remarks he was making on the prevalent opinion of the day, to ask him to write and publish something in reply to the often-repeated assertion that the Bible itself favours slavery. "The Bible," he replied, "has been quoted in favour of every

abomination that ever cursed the earth." He did not say he would write; but the idea sank into his mind, and not long after he sent us his able and exquisite little book, entitled *Does the Bible sanction Slavery?*– a masterly and beautiful exposition of the true spirit of the Mosaic law, and of the Theocratic government and training of the ancient Hebrew people in relation to this and other questions. This book was naturally not popular at the time, and I fear it has long been out of print. (It was published in 1863.)

> In this connection it is interesting to record, that two other notable books owed their inspiration in a large measure to Josephine Butler. *The Patience of Hope*, by Dora Greenwell, published in 1859, was dedicated to J. E. B., with the inscription —*A te principium, tibi desinet* (from thee begun with thee my work shall close). *Te sine nil altum mens inchoat* (without thee nothing high my mind essays). Frederic Myers, who had been at school at Cheltenham College, in his *Fragments of Inner Life*,[1] tells how"Christian conversion came to me in a potent form – through the agency of Josephine Butler, *née* Grey, whose name will not be forgotten in the annals of English philanthropy. She introduced me to Christianity, so to say, by an inner door; not to its encumbering forms and dogmas, but to its heart of fire. My poems of *St. Paul* and *St. John the Baptist*, intensely personal in their emotion, may serve as sufficient record of those years of eager faith." *St. Paul*, published in 1867,

[1] *Fragments of Prose and Poetry*, by Frederic W. H. Myers, 1904 (Longmans, Green & Co.), p. 22.

was dedicated to J. E. B., with the inscription – ᾗ καὶ τὴν ἐμὴν ψυχην ὀφείλω (to whom I owe my very soul). In 1869 Myers gave up a Lectureship at Trinity in order to devote himself to the promotion of the higher education of women, and he was one of the small band of university men, who worked hard with Josephine Butler and her colleagues on the North of England Council, to which we shall refer later on.

Among the public events which interested us most during these years was the revolution in Naples, the change of dynasty, and Garibaldi's career. Our interest was in part of a personal nature, as my sister, Madame Meuricoffre, and her husband were in the midst of these events. She had succeeded Jessie White Mario in the care of the wounded Garibaldians in the hospitals, and was personally acquainted with some of the actors in the dramatic scenes of that time. Having told her that my husband had set as a subject for a prize essay – to be competed for in the College at Cheltenham – "The unification of Italy," my sister mentioned it to Garibaldi, in expressing to him our sympathy for him and his cause. He immediately wrote a few lines, signing his name at the end, to be sent, through her, to the boy who should write the best essay on the subject so near to his heart.

A part of the summer holidays of 1864 were spent at Coniston in the house of Mr. James Marshall, which he lent to us. His sister, Mrs. Myers, had been our kind and constant friend at Cheltenham. It was a beautiful summer. We had returned to Cheltenham only a few days when a heavy sorrow fell upon our

home, the brightest of our little circle being suddenly snatched away from us. The dark shadow of that cloud cannot easily be described. I quote part of a letter written some weeks after our child's death to a friend.

Cheltenham, August, 1864.

These are but weak words. May you never know the grief which they hide rather than reveal. But God is good. He has, in mercy, at last sent me a ray of light, and low in the dust at His feet I have thanked Him for that ray of light as I never thanked Him for any blessing in the whole of my life before. It was difficult to endure at first the shock of the suddenness of that agonising death. Little gentle spirit! the softest death for her would have seemed sad enough. Never can I lose that memory – the fall, the sudden cry, and then the silence. It was pitiful to see her, helpless in her father's arms, her little drooping head resting on his shoulder, and her beautiful golden hair, all stained with blood, falling over his arm. Would to God that I had died that death for her! If we had been permitted, I thought, to have one look, one word of farewell, one moment of recognition! But though life flickered for an hour, she never recognised the father and mother whom she loved so dearly. We called her by her name, but there was no answer. She was our only daughter, the light and joy of our lives. She flitted in and out like a butterfly all day. She had never had a day's or an hour's illness in all her sweet life. She never gave us a moment of anxiety, her life was one flowing stream of mirth and fun and abounding love. The last morning she had said to me a

little verse she had learned somewhere —

Every morning the warm sun
Rises fair and bright;
But the evening cometh on,
And the dark, cold night.
There is a bright land far away,
Where tis never-ending day!

The dark, cold night came too soon for us, for it was that same evening, at seven o'clock, that she fell. The last words I had with her were about a pretty caterpillar she had found; she came to my room to beg for a little box to put it in. I gave it her and said, "Now trot away, for I am late for tea." What would I not give now for five minutes of that sweet presence? The only discipline she ever had was an occasional conflict with her own strong feelings and will. She disliked nothing so much as her little German lessons. Fräulein Blümke had called her one day to have one. She was sitting in a low chair. She grasped the arms of it tightly, and, looking very grave and determined, she replied, "Hush, wait a bit, I am fighting!" She sat silent for a few moments, and then walked quickly and firmly to have her German lesson. Fräulein asked her what she meant by saying she was fighting, and she replied, "I was fighting with myself" (to overcome her unwillingness to go to her books). I overheard Fräulein say to her in the midst of the lesson: "Arbeit, Eva, arbeit!" To which Eva replied with decision, "I am *arbeiting*,

Miss Blümke, as hard as ever I can."

One evening last autumn, when I went to see her after she was in bed and we were alone, she said: "Mammy, if I go to heaven before you, when the door of heaven opens to let you in I will run so fast to meet you; and when you put your arms round me, and we kiss each other, *all the angels will stand still to see us*." And she raised herself up in her ardour, her face beaming and her little chest heaving with the excitement of her loving anticipation. I recall her look; not the merry laughing look she generally had, but softened into an overflowing tenderness of the soul. She lay down again, but could not rest, and raising herself once more said, "I would like to pray again" (she had already said her little prayer); and we prayed again, about this meeting in heaven. I never thought for a moment that she would go first. I don't think I ever had a thought of death in connection with her; she was so full of life and energy. She was always showing her love in active ways. We used to imagine what it would be when she grew up, developing into acts of mercy and kindness. She was passionately devoted to her father, and after hugging him, and heaping endearing names upon him, she would fly off and tax her poor little tender fingers by making him something – a pincushion or kettle-holder. She made him blue, pink, white and striped pincushions and mats, for which he had not much use. But now he treasures up her poor little gifts as more precious than gold. If my head ached, she would bathe it with a sponge for an hour without tiring. Sweet Eva! Well might the Saviour say, "Of such is the Kingdom of Heaven." She was so perfectly

truthful, candid and pure. It was a wonderful repose for me, a good gift of God, when troubled by the evils in the world or my own thoughts, to turn to the perfect innocence and purity of that little maiden. But that joy is gone now for us. I am troubled for my husband. His grief is so deep and silent; but he is very, very patient. He loves children and all young creatures, and his love for her was wonderful. Her face, as she lay in death, wore a look of sweet, calm surprise, as if she said, "Now I see God." We stood in awe before her. She seemed to rebuke our grief in her rapt and holy sleep. Her hair had grown very long lately, and was of a deep chestnut brown, which in the sun flashed out all golden: —

Hair like a golden halo lying
Upon a pillow white;
Parted lips that mock all sighing,
Good night – good night!
Good night in anguish and in bitter pain;
Good morrow crowns another of the heavenly train.

This sorrow seemed to give in a measure a new direction to our lives and interests. There were some weeks of uncomforted grief. Her flight from earth had had the appearance of a most cruel accident. But do the words "accident" or "chance" properly find a place in the vocabulary of those who have placed themselves, and those dear to them, in a special manner under the daily providential care of a loving God? Here there entered into

the heart of our grief the intellectual difficulty, the moral perplexity and dismay which are not the least terrifying of the phantoms which haunt the "Valley of the shadow of Death" – that dark passage through which some toil only to emerge into a hopeless and final denial of the Divine goodness, the complete bankruptcy of faith; and others, by the mercy of God, through a still deeper experience, into a yet firmer trust in His unfailing love.

One day, going into his study, I found my husband alone, and looking ill. His hands were cold, he had an unusual paleness in his face, and he seemed faint. I was alarmed. I kneeled beside him, and, shaking myself out of my own stupor of grief, I spoke "comfortably" to him, and forced myself to talk cheerfully, even joyfully, of the happiness of our child, of the unclouded brightness of her brief life on earth, and her escape from the trials and sorrows she might have met with had she lived. He responded readily to the offered comfort, and the effort to strengthen him was helpful to myself. After this I often went to him in the evening after school hours, when, sitting side by side, we spoke of our child in heaven, until our own loss seemed to become somewhat less bitter.

The following is from a brief diary of the close of that sad year —

October 30th.– Last night I slept uneasily. I dreamed I had my darling in my arms, dying; that she struggled to live for my sake, lived again a moment, and then died. Just then I heard a sound, a low voice at my door, and I sprang to my

> feet. It was poor Stanley (our second son), scarcely awake, and in a fever. I took him in my arms, and carried him back to his bed, from which he had come to seek my help. In the morning he could not swallow, and pointed to his throat. Dr. Ker came and said he had diphtheria. My heart sank. I wondered whether God meant to ask us to give up another child so soon.

His illness was very severe, and for some days he hovered between life and death. But we were spared the added sorrow we dreaded. When he was sufficiently recovered, it was thought better that I should go with him abroad, to escape the winter's cold, and for a change of scene from that house round which clung the memory of such a tragic sorrow. My husband and other sons came to London with us, and a pleasant and able courier was engaged, who accompanied me and my little convalescent to Genoa, where we had been invited by kind relatives living there.

At the end of this visit it was arranged that I should accompany my sister to Naples, when we learned that the railway and roads were flooded, and that travelling by land would be difficult and even dangerous. Being unwilling to give up the long-cherished hope of a visit to my sister's home, I proposed that we should go by sea. My sister, though fearing a sea voyage for me in winter, assented to the arrangement, and as the weather was then very calm we started with good hopes. I had not, however, realised the gravity of the shock which my health had sustained before leaving England.

On this voyage she was taken very seriously ill, nigh unto death. “I was kneeling,” writes her sister, “and rubbing her hands and feet, trying to warm them; and while my imagination was realising all the terrors, my heart was praying desperately to God that He would make a way of escape, that He would work a miracle for us. *And He did.* The three boys went away and all prayed to God to save her. After a time I felt a hand on my shoulder. It was the captain. He said: ‘I saw the other mail vessel coming north, and I have signalled her. If she sees us you shall go on board and return to Leghorn. Make haste!’ I drew a long breath and said: ‘Thank God, I think we are saved!’ I felt the horror melting away in a measure, and hope springing up. We rolled her up, and I went for the weeping children, and found the kind young Sicilian officer comforting them. I thanked him. He said, in Italian, something about the love of Christ, so kindly. I had said very little about her. People must have been impressed with her look, and thought her dying, to take such extreme measures as to stop the two Government steamers on the high seas.”

CHAPTER IV.
LIVERPOOL

In the winter of 1865 my husband received one day a telegraphic message from Mr. Parker, of Liverpool, asking him if he would be willing to take the Principalship of the Liverpool College, vacated by the retirement of Dr. Howson, who became Dean of Chester. He accepted the invitation as providential, and went to Liverpool to see Mr. Parker, the directors of the college, and others interested in the choice of a new principal. There was no hesitation about the matter, and he was shortly afterwards elected. Our removal to Liverpool took place in January, 1866.

Liverpool is one of the largest seaports of the world. No greater contrast could have been found than it presented to the academic, intellectual character of Oxford, or the quiet educational and social conditions at Cheltenham. Its immense population, with a large intermingling of foreign elements, its twelve miles of docks lined with warehouses, its magnificent shipping, its cargoes and foreign sailors from every part of the world and from every nation of the earth, its varieties in the way of creeds and places of worship, its great wealth and its abject poverty, the perpetual movement, the coming and going, and the clash of interests in its midst – all these combined to make Liverpool a city of large and international character,

and of plentiful opportunities for the exercise of public spirit and catholic sentiment. The college shared the characteristics of the city in the midst of which it was set. Among its eight to nine hundred pupils there were Greeks, Armenians, Jews, Negroes, Americans, French, Germans, and Spaniards, as well as Welsh, Irish, Scotch and English. These represented many different religious persuasions. A man of narrow theological views would scarcely have found the position as head of such a school agreeable. Firmness and simplicity of faith, truth, charity and toleration, were qualities which were needed in the administrator of such a little world of varied international and denominational elements. The principalship must be held, by the rules of the college, by a member of the Church of England, and the directors had been happy in finding churchmen who were willing to accept the conditions presented, and able to work well in the midst of them. There were, as pupils at the college, the sons of two half-civilised African kings, Oko Jumbo and Jah-Jah. Their fathers having been old and sworn enemies, the two little fellows began their school acquaintance with many a tussle true to the inherited instinct. They were good boys, however, and one of them – afterwards a convinced and consistent Christian – became a missionary among his own countrymen, in spite of much opposition and even persecution, it was said, from his own father.

When we came to Liverpool in 1866, and my husband and sons began their regular life at the College, going there early and

returning in the evening, I was left many hours every day alone, empty-handed and sorrowful, the thought continually returning, "How sweet the presence of my little daughter would have been now." Most people, who have gone through any such experience, will understand me when I speak of the ebb and flow of sorrow. The wave retires perhaps after the first bitter weeks, and a kind of placid acquiescence follows. It may be only a natural giving way of the power of prolonged resistance of pain. Then there comes sometimes a second wave, which has been silently gathering strength, holding back, so to speak, in order to advance again with all its devouring force, thundering upon the shore. But who can write the rationale of sorrow? And who can explain its mysteries, its apparent inconsistencies and unreasonableness, its weakness and its strength? I suffered much during the first months in our new home. Music, art, reading, all failed as resources to alleviate or to interest. I became possessed with an irresistible desire to go forth and find some pain keener than my own, to meet with people more unhappy than myself (for I knew there were thousands of such). I did not exaggerate my own trial. I only knew that my heart ached night and day, and that the only solace possible would seem to be to find other hearts which ached night and day, and with more reason than mine. I had no clear idea beyond that, no plan for helping others; my sole wish was to plunge into the heart of some human misery, and to say (as I now knew I could) to afflicted people, "I understand: I too have suffered."

It was not difficult to find misery in Liverpool. There was an immense workhouse containing at that time, it was said, five thousand persons – a little town in itself. The general hospital for paupers included in it was blessed then by the angelic presence of Agnes Jones (whose work of beneficence was recorded after her death); but the other departments in the great building were not so well organised as they came to be some years later. There were extensive special wards, where unhappy girls drifted like autumn leaves when the winter approached, many of them to die of consumption, little cared for spiritually; for over this portion of the hospital Agnes Jones was not the presiding genius. There was on the ground floor a Bridewell for women, consisting of huge cellars, bare and unfurnished, with damp stone floors. These were called the "oakum sheds," and to these came voluntarily creatures driven by hunger, destitution, or vice, begging for a few nights' shelter and a piece of bread, in return for which they picked their allotted portion of oakum. Others were sent there as prisoners.

I went down to the oakum sheds and begged admission. I was taken into an immense gloomy vault filled with women and girls – more than two hundred probably at that time. I sat on the floor among them and picked oakum. They laughed at me, and told me my fingers were of no use for that work, which was true. But while we laughed we became friends. I proposed that they should learn a few verses to say to me on my next visit. I recollect a tall, dark, handsome girl standing up in our midst, among the

damp refuse and lumps of tarred rope, and repeating without a mistake and in a not unmusical voice, clear and ringing, that wonderful fourteenth chapter of St. John's Gospel – the words of Jesus all through, ending with, "Peace I leave with you. My peace I give unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." She had selected it herself, and they listened in perfect silence, this audience – wretched, draggled, ignorant, criminal some, and wild and defiant others. The tall, dark-haired girl had prepared the way for me, and I said, "Now let us all kneel, and cry to that same Jesus who spoke those words"; and down on their knees they fell every one of them, reverently, on that damp stone floor, some saying the words after me, others moaning and weeping. It was a strange sound, that united wail – continuous, pitiful, strong – like a great sigh or murmur of vague desire and hope, issuing from the heart of despair, piercing the gloom and murky atmosphere of that vaulted room, and reaching to the heart of God.

But I do not want to make a long story of this. The result of my visits to the hospital and quays and oakum sheds was to draw down upon my head an avalanche of miserable but grateful womanhood. Such a concourse gathered round our home that I had to stop to take breath, and consider some means of escape from the dilemma by providing some practical help, moral and material. There were not at that time many enlightened missions or measures in the town for dealing with the refuse of society. There was the Catholic Refuge of the Good Shepherd, some way

in the country; an old-fashioned Protestant Penitentiary, rather prison-like in character; another smaller refuge; and, best of all, a Home recently established by Mrs. Cropper. But it must not be supposed that the majority of my oakum shed friends were of a character to seek such asylums. Many of them – and especially the Irish Catholics – prided themselves on their virtue; and well they might, considering their miserable surroundings – girls who for the most part earned a scanty living by selling sand in the streets (for cleaning floors), or the refuse of the markets to the poorest of the population. Usually they were barefooted and bonnetless. The Lancashire women are strong and bold. The criminals of the oakum sheds and prison, sent to "do a week" or a month there, had most frequently been convicted of fighting and brawling on the quays and docks, of theft or drunkenness. There was stuff among them to make a very powerful brigade of workers in any active good cause. But there were others – the children of intemperate and criminal parents – who were, humanly speaking, useless, not quite "all there," poor, limp, fibreless human weeds. These last were the worst of all to deal with. I had the help at this time of a widowed sister who was visiting Liverpool, and who, in spite of very delicate health, threw herself heroically into the effort to help this work without a name which came upon us. We had a dry cellar in our house and a garret or two, and into these we crowded as many as possible of the most friendless girls who were anxious to make a fresh start. This became inconvenient, and so in time my husband and

I ventured to take a house near our own, trusting to find funds to furnish and fill it with inmates. This was the "House of Rest," which continued for many years, and developed, about the time we left Liverpool, into an incurable hospital, supported by the town. It was there that, a little later, women incurably ill were brought from the hospitals or their wretched homes, their beds in hospital being naturally wanted for others.

A few months later, encouraged by the help offered by a certain number of generous Liverpool merchants and other friends, we took a very large and solid house, with some ground round it, to serve as an industrial home for the healthy and active, the barefooted sand girls, and other friendless waifs and strays. We had a good gathering of friends and neighbours at a service which my husband held at the opening of the industrial home. His "dedication prayer" on that occasion was very touching, and full of kindness and heart-yearning towards the poor disinherited beings whom we desired to gather in. This house was very soon filled, and was successfully managed by an excellent matron, a mother. Besides the usual laundry and other work, we were able to set up a little envelope factory in one of the spacious rooms. This work called out some skill and nicety, and interested the girls very much. Several tradesmen and firms bought our envelopes at wholesale prices, and we also supplied some private friends disposed to help us. As chaplain, friend and adviser in these two modest institutions, my husband showed the same fidelity and constancy which he did in every other seriously

accepted or self-imposed duty. He often said that it was a rest and refreshment to him to visit our poor people in the evening, and more especially on Sunday. In the House of Rest were received "incurables" so-called (of whom not a few recovered). There was a very peaceful atmosphere in that house answering to its name – a spirit of repose, contentment, and even gaiety among the young inmates, scarcely clouded even by the frequent deaths, which came generally as a happy and not unexpected release, and were regarded by the living as a series of fresh bonds between the family in heaven and that on earth.

Drink was the great, the hopeless obstacle which I found among them. It was on this side that they would lapse again and again. Though it involved no change in my own habits, I thought it was best to take the pledge. I joined the Good Templars, who had many lodges in Liverpool.

Shortly before the creation of these two homes, we had a visit from my sister, Madame Meuricoffre. She and her husband, with their dear little girl, Josephine, had come from Naples to England, and had paid a visit to our father in Northumberland. They had, a short time before, lost a beloved child, their little Beatrice, during an outbreak of the cholera in Naples. The surviving little girl seemed to droop after the death of her companion. She (little Josephine) took ill on the way from the north, and before they reached Liverpool this darling of her parents had gone to join her beloved sister in the presence of God. The parents came to us in deep sorrow, bringing with them

the earthly remains of their child.

My sister joined me in my visits to the sick, criminal, and outcast women of Liverpool. We visited the wards of the great hospital together. The strong sympathy of her loving nature quickly won the hearts of desolate young girls, while she greatly strengthened me in the hope that we might be able to undo some of their heavy burdens.

Among the first who came to us to our own house, to die, was a certain Marion, who seemed to us a kind of first-fruits of the harvest, in the gathering in of which we were to be allowed in after years to participate. The first time I saw her was in a crowded room. Her face attracted me: not beautiful in the common acceptation of the word, but having a power greater than beauty; eyes full of intelligence and penetration; a countenance at once thoughtful and frank, with at times a wildly *seeking* look, as if her whole being cried out, "Who will show us any good?" She was ill, her lungs fatally attacked. I went up to her, and with no introduction of myself said, "Will you come with me to my home and live with me? I had a daughter once." She replied with a gasp of astonishment, grasping my hand as if she would never let it go again. I brought her home, my husband supported her upstairs, and we laid her on the couch in the pretty little spare room looking on the garden. She lived with us, an invalid, three months, and then died. It was difficult to suppress the thought, "If she had not been so destroyed, what a brightness and blessing she might have been in the world."

Untaught, unacquainted with the Scriptures till she came to us, she mastered the New Testament so thoroughly in that brief time that her acute questions and pregnant remarks were often a subject of wonder to my husband, who spent a portion of almost every evening with her in her room, conversing with and instructing her. Some of the intellectual difficulties which assail thoughtful students occurred to her. I witnessed many a severe struggle in her mind. She would often say, "I will ask Mr. Butler about it this evening." But her questions were sometimes such as cannot be answered, except by God Himself to the individual soul. This she knew, and through many sleepless nights her murmured prayers were heard by her attendant, "preventing the night watches." My husband said her remarks concerning the nature of a true faith sometimes strikingly resembled portions of the writings of a well-known modern philosophical thinker, which she had never read, for she had read nothing. I speak of her intellect, but her heart was yet greater. What capacities for noble love, for the deepest friendship, had been trampled under foot in that dear soul.

A well-known divine came to visit us, and hearing of our poor invalid, kindly offered to see and converse with her. My husband and I agreed that we would say nothing to our friend of Marion's past life, for we thought that, saintly man though he was, he probably had not faith enough to do justice to her and to himself in the interview if he had this knowledge. (There are few men whose faith comes up to that measure.) When he joined us again

downstairs his face was radiant, and he spoke, not of any teaching or comfort which he might have conveyed to her, but of the help and privilege it was to himself to have held communion during a short half hour with a dying saint, so young, yet so enlightened, and so near to God.

I recall the day of her death. It was a cold, snowy day in March. In the morning my husband went to see her early, before going out to his college work. She could scarcely speak, but looking earnestly at him said, as if to reward him for all his painstaking instructions, and guessing what he wished to know, "Yes, God is with me, sir; I have perfect peace." Her long death-struggle lasting twelve hours, joined with the peace and even joy of her spirit, was very affecting. Though it was bitterly cold, she whispered, "Open the windows, for the love of God." Her long black hair, thrust wildly back, was like the hair of a swimmer, dripping with water, so heavy were the death-dews. She became blind, and her fine intelligent eyes wandered ever, with an appealing look, to whatever part of the room she thought I was in. Towards sunset she murmured, "Oh, come quickly, Lord Jesus." During that long day she continually moved her arms like a swimmer, as if she felt herself sinking in deep waters. Then her poor little head fell forward, a long sigh escaped her parted lips, and at last I laid her down flat on her little bed. My husband and sons returned from college, and we all stood round her for a few minutes. She had become a household friend. She looked sweet and solemn then, her head drooping to one side, and with a worn-

out look on the young frail face, but a look, too, of perfect peace.

A few days before her death I telegraphed, at her request, to her father, who had had no tidings of his lost child for five years. He was an extensive farmer, well to do and honourable, living in a beautiful district in the midland counties. We were surprised, on his arrival, to see a very fine-looking country gentleman, as one would say, reminding us, in his noble height and figure and dignified presence, a little of my own father. He carried with him a valise and a handsome travelling rug. We took him to her room and retired. Their interview was best witnessed by God alone. After two hours or so I opened the door softly. He was lying on a couch at the opposite side of the room from her in a deep sleep, tired probably more by strong emotion than by his journey. She raised her finger for silence, and with the look and action of a guardian angel whispered, "Father is asleep."

After her death her poor mother came to attend her funeral. I had filled Marion's coffin with white camelias, banking them up all round her. With her hands crossed on her breast, and dressed as a bride for her Lord, she looked quite lovely. I found the mother alone, kneeling by the coffin in an agony of grief and of anger. She said (her body rocking backward and forward with emotion), "If *that man* could but see her now! Can we not send for him?" And she added, "Oh, what a difference there is in English gentlemen's households! To think that this child should have been ruined in one and saved in another!" Yes, it might have been good for "that man" to have been forced to step down from

his high social position and to look upon her then, and to have known the abyss from which she had been drawn, to the verge of which *he* had led her when she was but a child of fifteen.

Marion had "prophesied" to me, before she died, of hard days and a sad heart which were in store for me in contending against the evil to which she had fallen a victim. I recall her words with wonder and comfort. She would say, "When your soul quails at the sight of the evil, which will increase yet awhile, dear Mrs. Butler, *think of me* and take courage. God has given me to you, that you may never despair of any."

Snow lay thickly on the ground when we laid her in her grave in the cemetery. When we came back to the house I was trying to say something comforting to the mother, when she stopped me and said, "My heart is changed about it all. The bitter anger won't come back, I think; and what has taken it all away was the sight of Mr. Butler standing by the grave of my child, and the words he spoke. Oh, madam," she said, "when I looked at him standing there in the snow, dressed in his linen robe as white as the snow itself, and with that look on his face when he looked up to heaven and thanked God for my daughter now among the blessed, I could hardly refrain from falling on my knees at his feet, for he seemed to me like one of the angels of God! I felt happy then, almost proud, for my child. Oh, madam, I can never tell you what it was to me to look on your husband's face then! My heart was bursting with gratitude to God and to him."

There were others about the same time whom we took home,

who died in our own house, and were laid in graves side by side in the cemetery. Of one I have a clear remembrance, a girl of seventeen only, of some natural force of character. Her death was a prolonged hard battle with pain and with bitter memories, lightened by momentary flashes of faint hope. She struggled hard. We were called to her bedside suddenly one evening. She was dying, but with a strong effort she had raised herself to a sitting position. She drew us near to her by the appeal of her earnest eyes, and raising her right hand high with a strangely solemn gesture, and with a look full of heroic and desperate resolve, she said, "*I will fight for my soul through hosts, and hosts, and hosts!*" Her eyes, which seemed to be now looking far off, athwart the *hosts* of which she spoke, became dim, and she spoke no more. "Poor brave child!" I cried to her, "you will find on the other shore One waiting for you who has fought *through all those hosts for you*, who will not treat you as man has treated you." I cannot explain what she meant. I have never been quite able to understand it; but her words dwelt with us – "through hosts, and hosts, and hosts!" She had been trampled under the feet of men as the mire in the streets, had been hustled about from prison to the streets, and from the streets to prison, an orphan, unregarded by any but the vigilant police. From the first day she came to us we noticed in her, notwithstanding, an admirable self-respect, mixed with the full realisation of her misery. And that sense of the dignity and worth of the true self in her – the immortal, inalienable self – found expression in that indomitable resolution

of the dying girl: “I will fight for my soul through hosts, and hosts, and hosts!”

In the following winter my father died. On the 23rd of January, 1868, we were summoned by a telegraphic message from my sister, Mrs. Smyttan, who had lived with him during the last years of his life. But none of us saw him alive again. The end had been sudden, but very tranquil. His health was excellent to the last. On the morning of January 23rd, as he was passing from his bedroom to his study, he sat down, feeling faint, and raising his forefinger as if to enjoin silence, or intent upon a voice calling him away, he died without a struggle, and apparently without pain, in the eighty-third year of his age.

The family group which was gathered in that house of mourning was incomplete, for many were far away. One of the sisters wrote to the absent ones:

“Two days after our dear father’s death there was such a storm of wind for twenty-four hours as I scarcely remember. The house shook and heaved, and the sky was as dark as if there were an eclipse. The river roared and the windows rattled. We all cowered over the fire, and talked of him and of old days, trying to free ourselves from the sad, restless impression produced by the storm. We heard a crash, and on going upstairs found the window of the room where he lay blown in, the glass shivered about the floor, and the white sheet which had been thrown over the kingly corpse blown rudely away. There was something so irreverent about it, pitiful and weird-like; but he was not disturbed by it –

he was beyond all storms, in an infinite and everlasting calm. He looked so grand, and lay in such a majestic peace. His forehead, so high and broad and smooth, his soft grey hair smoothed back. I was much struck by the powerful look of his square jaw, and the union of tenderness and strength in the whole outline of his head and face. I felt almost triumphant about him; and yet how sorrowful such moments are, even when one can look back with thankfulness. The sorrow is not for one's own loss only; the presence of death in one so dear brings one for a moment into close relation with all the sorrows of earth. When Jesus wept at the grave of Lazarus it was not for Lazarus and his sisters only. He saw then and felt all the bereavements which would bow down the hearts of men to the end of time."

The company of voluntary followers to the grave was a very large one, all on foot. Around the tomb, where he was laid by the side of our dear mother, there stood a large and silent gathering of children and grandchildren, friends, servants, tenants and others. As we passed along the vale of Tyne on our way back to Lipwood we were much impressed by the outward results – in the high cultivation and look of happy prosperity of the country – of a long life usefully spent. And this feeling was shared by all the dwellers there, who, equally with ourselves, could mark in all around them the impress of his mind and hand. But only those who had had the happiness of his friendship and confidence could know, with his children, how much of strength and sweetness seemed to be gone away from earth when that great heart had ceased to beat.

One of the most prominent characteristics of our family life during all these years at Liverpool was that of our common enjoyment of our summer tours. There were circumstances which made our annual excursions more than the ordinary tours of some holiday-makers. In the first place, many of my own relatives were settled in different parts of the Continent, thus giving us a personal connection with those places. In order to pay a visit to the homes of some of them it was necessary to cross the Alps, while other near relatives lived in France and Switzerland.

It sometimes happens that the ordinary English traveller knows little of the general life of the people among whom he travels, of the history of the country, its politics, its social condition and prospects. He is content to gather to himself enjoyment from the beauties of Switzerland or the Tyrol, or Italy, while knowing little of the dwellers in those beautiful lands. A wider and a richer field is open to those who care to seek and explore it. My husband was not content without making himself acquainted, to a considerable extent, with the contemporary history of the countries through which we passed. His aptitude for languages aided him in intercourse with people of different nationalities; so that our family relationships abroad, and our friendships with many public men, as well as humble dwellers in continental countries, gave to our visits there a varied interest. These vacation tours were to us like sunlit mountain tops rising from the cloud-covered plain of our laborious life at Liverpool. Moreover, the enthusiasm which he had, and which

was shared by his sons, for geographical and geological research, together with our modest artistic efforts, added greatly to the interest of our travels. It was felt to be unsatisfactory to attempt to draw mountains and rocks without knowing something of their geological construction. During a visit which Mr. Ruskin paid us at Liverpool, he was turning over a portfolio of drawings done by my husband, and held in his hands for some time two or three sketches of the Aiguilles towering above the Mer de Glace, and other rocks and mountain buttresses in the neighbourhood of Chamounix. He said it gave him pleasure to look at those (he being a keen observer and student of mountain forms everywhere). "Your outlines of these peaks, Mr. Butler," he said, "are perfectly true: they are portraits. Very few people are able or care to represent the forms so correctly. For the most part artists are more anxious to produce an effective picture, than to give precisely what they see in nature."

Our sons inherited their father's out-door tastes. Our summer tours were therefore a source of the keenest enjoyment to us all. We saved up our money for them, worked towards them, and looked forward to them as a real happiness.

CHAPTER V.
EDUCATION OF WOMEN

Among the subjects concerning which my husband advanced with a quicker and firmer step than that of the society around him in general, stands that of the higher education of women. It may be difficult for the present generation to realise what an amount of dogged opposition and prejudice the pioneers of this movement had to encounter only some twenty-five years ago. We have made such rapid strides in the direction of women's education, that we almost forget that our ladies' colleges, higher examinations, and the various honours for which women compete so gallantly with men, are but of yesterday. Miss Clough called at our house in Liverpool one day in 1867, to ascertain the state of mind of the Principal of the Liverpool College in regard to the beautiful schemes, which were even then taking shape in her fruitful brain for the benefit of her fellow-women. I think she was heartily glad to find herself in a house where not a shadow of prejudice or doubt existed, to be argued down or patiently borne with until better days. My husband even went a little further, I believe, than she did at that time, in his hopes concerning the equality to be granted in future in the matter of educational advantages for boys and girls, men and women. An active propagandist work was started

soon after by James Stuart, of Trinity College, Cambridge, who made Liverpool his head-quarters during his first experiment in establishing lectures for ladies, which developed into the University Extension Scheme. It was arranged that the first course should embrace four of the most important towns of the North of England, constituting a sort of circuit. It seemed desirable that a man of experience and weight in the educational world should inaugurate this experiment by a preliminary address or lecture, given to mixed audiences, in each of these four towns. My husband undertook this task. His first address was given at Sheffield, where he was the guest of Canon Sale, who approved heartily of the movement. Without unnecessarily conjuring up spectres of opposition in order to dismiss them, he carefully framed his discourse so as to meet the prejudices of which the air, at that time, was full. It was generally imagined that a severer intellectual training than women had hitherto received would make them unwomanly, hard, unlovely, pedantic, and disinclined for domestic duties, while the dangers to physical health were dolorously prophesied by medical men and others. In concluding his inaugural address, my husband said: "A community of women, established purposely to educate girls and to train teachers, was not known in Christendom till the institution of the Ursulines by Angela dà Brescia, in 1537. So unheard of at this time was any attempt of women to organise a systematic education for their own sex, that when Françoise de Saintange undertook to found such a school at Dijon she was hooted in

the streets, and her father called together four doctors learned in the laws, 'pour s'assurer qu'instruire des femmes n'était pas un œuvre du démon.' Even after he had given his consent, he was afraid to countenance his daughter, and Françoise, unprotected and unaided, began her first school in a garret. Twelve years afterwards she was carried in triumph through the streets, with bells ringing and flowers strewed in her path, *because she had succeeded*

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.